

Exhibit 4

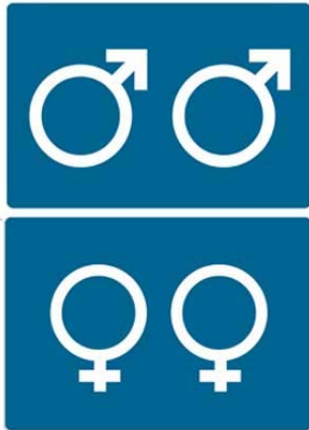
Exhibit 4

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Who signs R-71? Foes may post it online

by **David Ammons** | June 2nd, 2009



Some foes of a referendum aimed at halting a new “everything but marriage” law in Washington state plan to eventually publish online the names and addresses of everyone who signs the Referendum 71 petitions. The state Elections Division is encouraging “civil debate” on the measure and expressing concern if the signature-gathering process is suppressed or voters feel threatened in any way.

Washington Values Alliance, which opposes gay marriage and is sponsoring R-71, will begin circulating petitions this week. They’ll be racing a July 25 deadline to collect roughly 150,000 voter signatures (120,577 is the bare minimum, and a pad is suggested to cover the invalid signatures).

The new twist is that a group called whosigned.org ([here](#) is its link) intends to make the signatures available and searchable on the Internet. The referendum petition sheets, typically 10,000 or more, including the names and addresses of signers, become a public record after the sponsors actually submit them, in this case by July 25, and they are returned from Archives imaging.

Spokesmen for the new project say they want voters to think twice about signing the petitions and that opponents of R-71 should be able to talk with their neighbors and townspeople who signed to explain the ramifications. The main opposition [group](#), however, opposes the online project and R-71 [sponsors](#) say it amounts to bullying and is aimed at suppressing signatures.

State Elections Director Nick Handy notes the the state has long been committed to open records and transparency in government, but says he’s unhappy with the thought of the petition process being used as a weapon to dampen voters’ participation in their constitutional right of petition. He says,

“A vigorous debate on the issues is always welcome, but efforts to intimidate or repress participation are not. It just doesn’t feel like the culture we have here in the state of Washington. An unhealthy chilling effect occurs when public debate reaches a point where the passion of some individuals drives some folks to take actions that are viewed by others as threatening or intimidating. We call for open and healthy public debate without resort to these methods.”

It is a crime to interfere with signature-gathering or to threaten or intimidate voters.

The state of Washington has no authority to withhold the identities of people who sign initiative or referendum petitions, just as the names and hometowns of campaign donors to ballot campaigns are available online at the Public Disclosure Commission.

“Nobody is comfortable with releasing personal information in situations like this, but it is part of transparency

in government,” Handy says. “We hope people will keep their cool.”

12 Responses to “Who signs R-71? Foes may post it online”



1. *Mikos* says:

[June 2, 2009 at 1:48 PM](#)

I’ve signed more petitions than I’ve ever voted for. Many I thought should make it onto the ballot because I believe in the democratic process especially when it comes to broad issues of public concern. I believe this is one, although I won’t vote for it if it makes the ballot. The heavy-handed tactics of those who oppose this petition discredits their cause.



2. *Carol* says:

[June 3, 2009 at 2:06 PM](#)

I understand that many people don’t want anyone to know that they support forcing women to bear the child of their rapist, or daughters to bear that of their incestuous father or uncle, or forcing a woman to choose death and give up the rest of her life to save a baby that may or may not live, because they know it is cruel and that despite rhetoric, their religion doesn’t really support that position, but those raised in christian religions (yes, I know from personal recovery) are so brainwashed into thinking they’re “bad” if they disagree with their religion that they don’t WANT to face it, and doubtless are afraid to let anyone talk them around to some common sense and compassion (a trait they could at least share with Jesus). While the tactics of gay-rights proponents may be heavy-handed on this one particular issue, it will take that to fight the heavy-handed vitriole of their opposition.



3. *D.R. Walker* says:

[June 3, 2009 at 3:36 PM](#)

The problem is not the signing of these petitions,nor the publishing of the names. The problem is the harressment of those folks who are simply exercising thier right. Period. The solution is for law enforcement to come down hard on the folks who threat, intimidate, harm, or in any way embaress the signors.



4. *David A.* says:

[June 5, 2009 at 8:38 AM](#)

I like both Mikos and D.R.’s statements. I am a supporter of the expansion of Domestic Partnership rights and gay marriage, but I do not support the “exposing” of the petition signers. Sure signatures on a petition are public records (if they are eventually submitted to the Secretary of State) but that does not give those who disagree with the petition license to harass those who sign onto the petition. I am reminded of the public shaming that the government use to use against gay people when they raided gay bars and published photos and names of those exercising their first amendment right to free association.



5. *Joe Reilly* says:

[June 5, 2009 at 1:39 PM](#)

Reminding people that signing a petition for a referendum (or other initiative) is a public event, isn’t in any way harassment. I know that I will be contacting any friends or family members who sign this petition and asking them to revoke their signature after educating them about the effects of the referendum. I don’t expect signature gatherers to do a fair job of representing the referendum and welcome this opportunity set the record straight with my friends and family.



6. *Cassy Edwards* says:

[June 6, 2009 at 9:55 AM](#)

When I sign a petition I am requesting a public vote on the topic of the petition...PERIOD.

I am not stating a position either for OR against what I am asking to vote on – merely asking to be given a chance to vote on it.

My signature on a petition DOES NOT give ANYONE permission to contact me regarding my signature except for those in charge of ensuring that I did, in fact, lawfully sign the petition.

Publish my name, address, phone and anything else you may like about my having signed a petition – just don't contact me.

My vote, or intended vote, is privileged and private information. I WILL make up my mind WITHOUT outside interference, thank you very much!

7.  *Davecomment* says:
[June 9, 2009 at 4:04 PM](#)

The goal of “transparency” and “education” of signors by “identifying” them is not what its promotors really want. Read the reports of post-election intimidation, loss of employment, vandalism, and harassment in California against donors in favor of Prop 8.

Those who think that “identifying” polticially wrong thinking segments of the population is for their “education” are naive.

This effort is to intimidate.

If Hitler had the internet he would have listed names and addresses of Jews.

8.  *FedUpLisa* says:
[June 10, 2009 at 8:51 AM](#)

It seems the spirit of McCarthyism — blacklisting and intimidation — lives on. How sad.

9.  *Baconcat* says:
[June 10, 2009 at 11:29 AM](#)

The creator of the whosigned website, unaffiliated with any pro-equality/pro-family groups and with little support from the pro-equality/pro-family community, has stated now that he only intends on listing by name and zip. Interestingly enough, anyone who fears they may be living near a homosexual domestic partnership may run a lookup by name of any of the 5,000 couples in this state and get all the info they want. Similarly, it isn't hard for them to get the vitals on all these couples.

With the unfounded and certifiably untrue claims made by the anti-equality/anti-family side in regards to violence against supporters of Prop 8 (none!, compared against the beating of the leader of an equality torch rally last week), claims of McCarthyism and comparisons to the nazis, do you think there is any reason to believe at this point that they are in any danger except to themselves?

The ballot language is clear, this is not marriage. That truth is not sufficient to the anti-family/anti-equality side, though, and that should be a red flag to any rational person, especially since the petition claims it is indeed marriage.

I'm sure any reaction based off of whosigned.org would pale in comparison to the revenge and attacks doled out by anti-equality/anti-family groups against pro-equality/pro-family groups and GLBT and elderly domestic partners, should R-71 fail to reach the ballot or pass in November.

Giving them political cover like this, especially when the story and reality has changed...? I'm not so sure I like this. Of course, it's just my own personal opinion, so let elected officials do what they feel is right and we'll sort it out at the polls later.

10.  *Christina Siderius* says:

[June 11, 2009 at 1:50 PM](#)

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<http://blogs.secstate.wa.gov/FromOurCorner/index.php/blog-use-policy>

Thanks!

11.  *Brian San Diego* says:
[June 21, 2009 at 1:41 AM](#)

Dear Cassy Edwards:

Why would you sign a petition to get it on the ballot if you didn't intend to vote for it when it got there? If you expect anyone to believe that, you being disingenious. Also go ahead and sign the petition and then deny that you plan to support the repeal of a law that extends rights to people. Be proud that you helped repeal a law that grants loving couples hospital visitation rights etc. I don't understand why people would be so mean-spirited. You can couch it anyway you like. Calling it protecting marriage. It is stripping rights away from a minority of people. If you are proud to sign that petition, I encourage you to. But keep in mind, you are hurting people by doing so. If you can look the same-sex couple in the eye that you see at your local grocery store and feel good about it, then I feel sorry for you. Expect to be contacted after you sign the petition by your neighbors and co-workers and friends and family. Little do you know that one of them is gay and they will wonder why you would help get something on the ballot that would take away rights from them and really cause harm to them. People don't understand that they are hurting real people. It is so sad.

12.  *frank* says:
[June 30, 2009 at 5:27 PM](#)

Just a thought about freedom they call and harass me its freedom of speech I call them its a hate crime and 15 years in prison and they call that fair

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